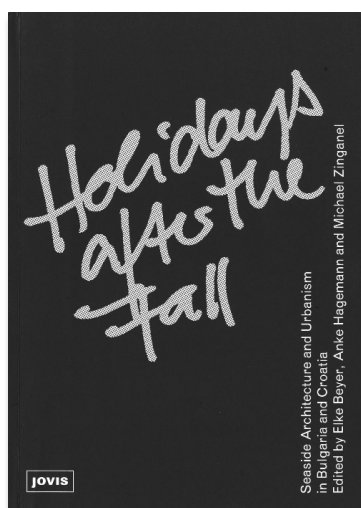


book review

Holidays after the fall – Seaside architecture and urbanism in Bulgaria and Croatia

Although the tourist architecture in Croatia built after the World War II has been recognized for its quality by the Croatian professional public, there is still a lack of complete evaluation and critical revision of tourism development during the years of most intensive construction.



Book that was published in Berlin recently, *Holidays after the Fall – Seaside Architecture and Urbanism in Bulgaria and Croatia*, helps to create a better overview of relation between tourism and architecture during the socialist era not only in Croatia but in Bulgaria as well. Editors of the book are Elke Beyer, Anke Hagemann and Michael Zinganel, and the authors of texts are, alongside the editors, Norbert Mappes-Niedick and Maroje Mrduljaš. The presentations of the book in Berlin, Vienna and Graz, were accompanied by an interesting art exhibition.

After the introduction, Zinganel explains the beginnings of mass tourism development in the interwar period and describes its take-off after the World War II. After the devastations caused by war, tourism was meant to serve as a model of development and creation of a new society. Authors are fascinated by the organization and implementation of planned mass tourism development in Croatia and Bulgaria,

especially considering the influence of architecture on the modernization of tourism destinations of the 20th century. Although the book focuses more on the architectural and urbanistic aspects of tourism in Croatia and Bulgaria, but it takes into account the economic aspect of tourism as the most important in the general analysis of tourism as a social phenomenon.

Croatian architects managed to put themselves in a position of forming the architectural tourism product meant to impress, both, foreign and domestic visitors. This has allowed architects and planners to focus on the quality of urbanism and architectural designs of accommodation facilities. Authors believe that socialist countries provided economic freedom to the architects and thus they were able to focus more on the aesthetics of their designs, whereas capitalist countries were focused more on economic viability, restricting the creativity.

The smallest chapter of the book analyses the threats that were endangering the planned tourist zones after the introduction of market economy. Authors warn about the current condition of some of those planned resorts and, also, the mistreating of those resorts by their new owners. The preservation of architectural originality and value of the post-war architecture is being questioned in these new business conditions. The change of ownership became a burden in some cases, authors argue, as some of the resorts are no longer in their original function, for example Haludovo on the island of Krk and Kupari resort (which did not survive wartime devastation).

The individual hotels were analyzed in the last part of the book. Project for each hotel is presented, together with an analyses of urbanistic conditions, outstanding architectural features and their contemporary use.

Although socialism has a bad reputation in both Croatia and Bulgaria, authors conclude that a large number of hotels and resorts constructed during the socialist era on the Adriatic and the Black Sea, are, in fact, considered to be amongst the best architectural designs in the world. That achievement certainly would not be possible if tourism was not one of the strategic goals of development.

Editors: Elke Beyer, Anke Hagemann and Michael Zinganel

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